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AN ACCOUNT OF THE ATTEMPTS

TO ESTABLISH

FENIANISM IN MONTREAL

A MEMOIR: BY THE HON. THOS. D'ARCY M'GEE.

Taken from the MONTREAL GAZETTE, of 19th, 21st and 23rd Aug., 1867.

Montreal :

THE POST PRINTING AND PUBLISHING COMPANY, 761 CRAIG STREET.

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FENIANISM IN MONTREAL.

I.

The Government of Canada, for reasons which they deemed sufficient, have avoided bringing before the ordinary tribunals those persons amongst us who were well known for their complicity in the Fenian conspiracy against the peace and well being of this country. The arrest of Michael Murphy, of Toronto—the Canadian head-centre—and his companions, when actually *en route* to join the Fenian invaders of New Brunswick, in April, 1866, and their preliminary examination before the Cornwall magistracy, was likely to prove an exception to this rule; but the principal prisoners having effected their escape before the term of Queen's Bench arrived, the extent of the ramification of the conspiracy in Canada—or rather the evil industry with which it was attempted to establish it here—has never been clearly exhibited to the public. The same persons engaged in that conspiracy in Montreal having now emerged from their covers—having shown themselves in public as an organization—having decided in secret council who shall and who shall not have freedom of speech in this city; these emissaries, agents and correspondents of the New York Fenians, having attempted to take the destinies of the city under their control by force and violence, Mr. D'Arcy McGee, in defence of the liberties of the city, and in self-defence, has recourse by the present means, to the columns of the public press in order to make known the story of the conspiracy through a medium where, fortunately, free discussion cannot yet be stifled.

II.

The facts stated in this memoir have reached the writer during the last few years from many sources, but chiefly from old friends in New York, Boston, Chicago, and elsewhere in the United States, opposed on principle to Fenianism. Also from Canadians resident in the United States; also use is made of the reports, circulars and plans of the New York Fenian leaders, copies of which could always be had for a trifling consideration; also of the Irish Fenian trials of 1865-66 and the present year, reports of which are before the writer,

and in which occasionally much light is shed on the designs against Canada. No document in the possession of the Canadian authorities is quoted unless such document was communicated to them by or through Mr. McGee, having first reached him through one or other of the above sources.

III.

A brief retrospective view is necessary at the outset.

Secret Irish societies, chiefly combinations of laborers from particular counties in Ireland, to obtain exclusively employment on public and other works have long existed in the United States. They were chiefly imitations of the agrarian secret societies such as Ribbonmen in Ireland. One of the best known of these Irish-American orders was the "Shamrock Society," which excluded natives of Cork and Connaught, King's and Queen's counties, and which was formally condemned by Archbishop Hughes, soon after his elevation to the See of New York. Notwithstanding this condemnation this secret laborers' society continued to exist, and may perhaps still exist. In 1853 its headquarters were at Brooklyn, New York, Michael Newman being "General President," and John Dowd "General Secretary." The pass-words and peace-words of the initiated for "The May Quarter," 1853, were the following:—

Q. How do you like our present appearance?

A. I think your love of friendship is admirable.

Q. A true knowledge of it would convince you?

A. I have been weighed in the balance and not found wanting

PEACE-WORDS.

Q. Shall we quarrel for nothing?

A. No; friendship now prevents us.

NIGHT-WORDS.

Q. All night, my friend?

A. A part will do me.

The Shamrock and similar societies, though sometimes used for American electioneering purposes, resembled rather trades' unions than the revolutionary organizations of the European continent. The time era of the establishment of the latter description of organization, of which Fenianism has been the most successful specimen, is the year 1849 or 1850, and the circumstances which led to this portentous novelty must be briefly explained, as being necessary to a clear understanding of this statement.

IV.

The Young Ireland party who seceded from O'Connell in July, 1846, so late as January, 1848, after a three nights' discussion in

the Rotunda, voted down, by a majority of 3 to 1, Mr. John Mitchell's revolutionary programme. Mitchell was sustained in his course by Mr. Devin Keilly, who some years since died in an official position at Washington; by Mr. Eugene O'Reilly, subsequently a Sardinian officer and an officer in the service of the Sultan, under the style of Hassan Aga; by Mr. John Fisher Murray and others of less note. On the other side were Messrs. Smith O'Brien, Duffy, O'Gorman, Meagher, Dillon, McGee, etc., the latter being the youngest active member of the party, just then turned 22 years of age. The *moderados*, as they were called, contended only for the repeal of the Legislative Union and the restoration of Grattan's constitution of 1782. The revolutionary party ridiculed this *juste milieu* course in some eleven doggerel verses which hit the *jackeen* imagination to a "T," and the refrain of which ran—

"The constitution of '82,
Diderum doo; diderum doo!"

Unfortunately for the maintenance of the moderate and constitutional course decided on in January, the French revolution of 1848 broke out in February, followed by a general European explosion. The Dublin mob were carried away with the torrent and, truth to tell, most of the leaders too. The reading rooms, first founded by Mr. McGee in the winter of 1846 for the information of the young men of that party, were turned into gun clubs. Nothing was heard among the mass of the populace but revolutionary slang. The last time the present writer spoke in public in Dublin, some weeks after the French revolutionary mania broke out, was in the Abbey street theatre; and when some of the audience cried out, "Republic! Republic!" he turned round to the quarter from which the cry proceeded and answered, "A Republic, if you had a Republic you would not know what to do with it." For this he was hissed; and but for a gentleman, now a well-known citizen of Montreal, might have been roughly handled. But all attempts to put on the brakes were in vain. The venerable Robert Holmes, the equally venerable Lord Cloncurry appealed to Mr. Smith O'Brien and his friends, and all but went on their knees to beg them to stop in their mad career. A false sense of honor drove them on to their ruin. They had "gone too far" to retrace their steps without the imputation of cowardice, and the fear of being thought afraid led men lengths that in their inmost hearts they knew to be unwise and ruinous. Writing with the impartiality of history it must be recorded that the moderate men among the Young Irelanders after the French revolution of 1848 failed in moral courage, and thereby threw the reins into the hands of the Mitchellite sect, who had a definite object, though a mad one, set steadily before them.

V.

If, however, Fenianism has come out of Young Irelandism, it is as maggots come out of flesh wounds; not as the healthy plant comes

from the wholesome seeding, or as the branch comes from the tree. It is quite true the inflammatory literature of Young Ireland has been pressed into the Fenian service,—that their favorite motto is taken from Thomas Davis, an Irish Protestant patriarch, who died all too soon, and whom poor Meagher used to call, “Our Prophet and our Guide.” But it is equally true, and it is but just that it should be of this record, that no member of the Young Ireland party was ever sworn to secrecy; that no party oath ever existed among them, that neither sign nor password was ever introduced among them. To the last all the principal men of that set, all the “moderadoes” certainly remained resolute enemies of sworn secrecy as applied to the politics of Ireland. Smith O’Brien in his letter from Dalkey to the editor of the *Nation*, a year or two before his death, denounced Fenianism as heartily as ever Mr. McGee did in Montreal; and Fenianism, true to its baser instincts, returned the compliment. It hooted Dillon and Duffy and denied them a hearing at the election of 1865 at Clonmel; it cried “Traitor” at two of the best and ablest men Ireland in this age has produced, because one was a Colonial Minister and the other a candidate for the House of Commons. Even in America no leading Young Irelander, except poor Doheney (*de mortuis est nil nisi bonum*), ever recognized or associated with these scamps. Men formed in the school of the old *Nation* would have felt such association to be a personal and national degradation to themselves and to their cause. Whatever Young Ireland’s faults and follies may have been it was not by fleecing the ignorant or dazzling their eyes with impossibilities, while at the same time picking their pockets, that the leaders of that sect sought to serve their country. So much common justice demands to have recorded.

VI.

But the turning of the Irish mind towards France in 1848 and the apparent hopelessness of constitutional agitation which died with O’Connell, in 1847, predisposed some ardent and not over-scrupulous spirits to fall back, after the Young Ireland *fiasco*, on sworn secrecy as the true revolutionary basis. Mr. James Fenton Lalor, of Abbey-leix, Queen’s County, a man who in a deformed and decrepid body concealed the daring spirit of a Danton or a Marat, established some sort of secret system in Dublin, as early as 1848. But his death soon after retarded its development. It was undoubtedly out of the embers of that first fire that Mr. James Stephens was able to get up, some years later, a new and more widespread brotherhood. In New York, so early as 1852 (perhaps before), a secret revolutionary Irish society called the “Phoenix” had been established by Colonel Doheney, Mr. John Savage and others. This society was soon extended by the agency of Stephens into the southern counties of Ireland, especially Cork and Kerry. In 1857-8-9 several arrests were made in Ireland of “Phoenix Boys” and some severe sentences were passed. The old story over again; several of the brethren, and notably one O’Sullivan,

called *Ghoula*, turned Crown evidence on their associates, and the law was firmly and justly enforced against the conspirators; but the examples made and the inability of the brotherhood in America even to fee counsel for the defence of their dupes at home, acted as an extinguisher on the "Phoenix Society."

VII.

The last and most mischievous of these organizations had its commencement in New York in 1857. In his translation of Keating's history, Mr. O'Mahoney had found, both in the introduction and in the body of the book, very glowing references to a military organization among the Pagan Irish called the *Fiann-Eriann*, from the famous Fion or Fin their leader, better known to English readers as the Fingal or MacPherson. Hence the name, somewhat modified, of Fenian. The founder, Mr. John O'Mahoney, was a middle-aged political refugee of 1848, of a good Munster family and superior education. Mr. O'Mahoney's antecedents, so far as they bear on the society's being founded, must be mentioned. His personal courage was rated very high by his friends, his scholarship is amply shown in his translation of Keating's Irish History of Ireland (New York, Haverty, 1857.) He had soon after coming to New York gone stark mad on spirit rapping, and had been an inmate of the Flatbush Insane Asylum. Mr. O'Mahoney, like Mr. Stephens, and more recently, Mr. Roberts, had been in personal communication with the leaders of the secret revolutionary societies of Europe and he organized his new brotherhood on the true Mazzinian basis. It was to be both a civil and a military organization, and so soon as it mustered men enough Mr. O'Mahoney took to himself the *brevet* rank of Colonel. He was joined by Colonel Doheney and the *debris* of "The Phoenix Boys;" by Captain, afterwards General Corcoran (court martialed for refusing to take out his men to receive the Prince of Wales, in 1860), and some others. The military department of the brotherhood, however, made no great stride till the breaking out of the civil war. According to the audit of the Moffatt Mansion accounts (published in the *New York World*), Mr. O'Mahoney's entire receipts from 1857 till 1861 inclusive did not exceed \$10,000, or \$3,000 per annum. But from 1861 till 1865 inclusive the total exceeded \$250,000 *greenbacks*, or a quarter of a million. It was during this latter period when the organization was petted as a recruiting agency by the Federal Government; when appeals to the Irish antipathy against England resounded on every side; when Senators and Governors of Legislative Assemblies and judges of the land did not hesitate to resort to such incendiary appeals; it was during this period, before the splitting off of the Roberts' wing, when the head centre was full of funds and his staff full of insolent confidence, that the first stealthy attempts were made to introduce Fenianism into our principal Canadian towns and cities, and also into some of our Irish Catholic rural settlements. My present business, however, is with the attempts made to establish the conspiracy in Montreal;

but I shall be obliged to refer incidentally to the more successful efforts made in Toronto, because to a certain extent the Montreal attempts were subordinate to, if they were not actually regulated from, Toronto.

VIII.

One word as to the time chosen for making public this statement. I frankly declare that *even now* if, after the exhibition O'Mahoney, Stephens, Roberts and the rest of them have made of themselves, if even now I could only hope their sympathizers and correspondents among us had abandoned their criminal complicity with the New York organizers of raids upon Canada; if there was any good hope that the guilty plotters were open to conviction or right feeling, I, for one, would drop the curtain and burn the documents. But it is quite otherwise; emboldened by the misunderstood forbearance of this Government, encouraged by evil counsellors to continue in the secret violation of the law, this handful of conspirators have at length undertaken to control the destinies of the city, to elevate one of their chief patrons into a legislator, to decree in their hidden conclaves who shall and who shall not have liberty of speech among us; they have merged from darkness into daylight, and so must "their works follow them." Whatever may be the consequence to a few scoundrels (and no honest man need fear my revelations), this narrative, at least, is placed beyond the power of accident to interrupt or destroy.

IX.

The existence of such an organization as the F. B. or the I. R. in the United States had not attracted much attention in Canada, except among those who, like the writer, were accustomed to watch Irish-American affairs somewhat closely up to the close of the year 1861. Every Montrealer will remember the Trent affair and the state of feeling in the city during those exciting days and weeks, when, in the absence of the cable, we were waiting for the mails which were to bring us England's ultimatum. It was at that period Mr. McGee's attention was first drawn to the existence of a pro-Fenian sentiment or element in this city, as yet inchoate and unformed, but still very undesirable to have in our midst in case of trouble. There seemed at one time a possibility of war arising out of the capture of Mason and Slidell, and men of all classes were vying with each other in offering their services to the Government. A meeting was called by myself and some others to form an "Irish battalion," with a view of placing them at His Excellency's disposal. It was held in Nordheimer's Hall, Mr. Marcus Doherty, the President of St. Patrick's Society, in the chair. Mr. George Daly, now in Australia, and the present writer spoke, or rather attempted to speak. The meeting, though with us by a very large majority, was systematically and violently disturbed from first to last, and among the leading disturbers were identified on the spot Mr. O. J. Devlin and several of Mr.

Devlin's then company, the Prince of Wales regiment. Captain Devlin was not present in person. What, however, gave significance to the affair was that it had its origin among the F. B. in Rutland, Vermont. A Mr. Keogh, or MacKeogh, of that town, with twelve or thirteen others, purchased return tickets at Rutland and came into Montreal that day. They were the nucleus of the rioters and this Mr. MacKeogh was so elated with his success on his return to Rutland that he described the whole scene of the break up of "the Irish battalion meeting" in a letter over his own name, addressed to the editor of the *Irish American*, of New York, a paper edited by Senator Meehan, of the F. B., and now the recognized organ of the Roberts or anti-Canadian Fenians.

X.

Anxious to prevent at the outset, if possible, the introduction of so dangerous a society into Montreal, Mr. McGee, soon after the above occurrence, published a warning letter in the *Montreal Herald*, with which he was then on friendly terms, over the signature *Civis Canadensis*, referring especially to the very severe act against secret seditious societies remaining on our Lower Canada statute book since 1839, the two first clauses of which he quoted and re-quoted in a letter to the *Gazette* over his own name somewhat later. These clauses are to be found on page 48 of the Consolidated Statutes of Lower Canada and, as they define the illegal nature of Fenianism precisely, may here be once more quoted:—

1. "Any person who, in any form, administers or causes to be administered, or is aiding or present at and consenting to the administration or taking of any oath or engagement purposing or intending to bind the person taking the same to commit any treason or murder, or any felony punishable with death, or to engage in any seditious, rebellious or treasonable purpose, or to disturb the public peace, or to be of any association or confederacy formed for any such purpose, or to obey the order or commands of any committee or body of men not lawfully constituted, or of any leader or commander or other person not having authority by law for that purpose, or not to inform or give evidence against any associate, confederate or other person, or not to reveal or discover any illegal act done or to be done, or not to reveal or discover illegal oath or engagement administered or tendered to, or taken by such person or persons, or to or by any other person, or the import of any such oath or engagement, shall be guilty of felony and *may be imprisoned in the Provincial Penitentiary for any term of years not exceeding twenty-one years.*"

3. "And every person who takes any such oath or engagement, not being compelled thereto, shall be guilty of felony, and may be imprisoned in the Provincial Penitentiary for any term of years not exceeding seven years." 2 Vic, (2), chap. 8, sec. 1, and 6 Vic., chap. 5, sec. 4.

This warning did not prevail. Fenian sentiments were expressed and were traced to more than one individual among us during 1862 and 1863. In September of the latter year 1863 there was evidence enough of the spread of such sentiments to some considerable extent, to call the attention of his Lordship Monsignor Bourget to the subject. Our Bishop accordingly issued a solemn pastoral letter of warning

and condemnation against all such societies which was read and commented on with great force and energy by the Rev. Mr. Dowd from the pulpit of St. Patrick's Church. Nevertheless, so besotted were those ensnared by the enemy that some of them were heard to declare coming out of church "Oh Father Dowd did not mean what he said ; he only did it for policy sake," an imputation which the basest and bitterest enemy of the church and the clergy could not excel in malignity. This too shows that when Catholic Irishmen surrender their moral sense to such a tribunal as Fenianism they rapidly lose the faculty of distinguishing between right and wrong.

XI.

In November, 1863, Mr. McGee had occasion to visit Peterborough C.W., where he committed one of his unpardonable sins, "lecturing against Fenianism." In reply to a published address from the St. Patrick's Society of that town, Mr. McGee, whose information on the subject was all along accurate, early, and verified by the facts as they were, said :—

" But, gentlemen, I have heard of late that there is another description of society, secret, and, it is alleged, seditious in its nature, attempted to be introduced by our countrymen by birth, settled in certain of our frontier towns and cities. Against such a society as that I take this occasion to warn (not you, for I know you would abhor it as I do), but to warn those who at any point or place within this Province are exposed to its seductions. Its specious object, I am told, is to promote union among Irishmen. But how can such a society promote such a union when it is sure to have more of us against it than for it, let it enlist ever so many dupes ? It can only divide and weaken us and deliver us over an easy prey to our social and political opponents ; for, I suppose, like all other men, we have such opponents. Such a society is, therefore, self-condemned by its own declaration ; but, moreover, expressly condemned by the voice of that Church which all Catholic Irishmen believe to be, in matters of faith and morals, the voice of God.

I repeat I am quite sure that the secret society to which I refer has made as yet no progress whatever among our countrymen in Canada. But emissaries are abroad, the tones on this continent are full of plots and conspiracies, as well as wars and intentions of wars. A warning voice has already been issued on this subject from the highest ecclesiastical authority in the diocese in which I reside, and I now give you, gentlemen, as a layman addressing laymen, in answer to all your kind, to all your undeserved compliments, the best proof I can give at this moment of my thorough devotion to the true interests of the Irish in Canada. No man shall ever live to say that when the appearance of even a new danger menaced you Thomas D'Arcy McGee basely held his peace for any personal consideration whatever.

" My opinion as to societies is this—encourage your lawful, patriotic and public societies, which both the human and the divine law sanction, but avoid as you would the "jaws of hell" this secret brotherhood, at whose threshold you must lay down every manly prerogative and every moral responsibility, to obey a tribunal sitting in darkness, and whose end must be, like its origin, repugnant alike to the laws of man and the laws of God."

XII

At the date of the above address, there were distinctly traceable at Toronto and Montreal and elsewhere, systematic and continuous attempts to turn whatever pro-Fenianism sentiment existed in the Province into a regular Fenian organization. This determination manifested itself in several incidents, which we shall proceed to relate. At the Cincinnati and Chicago Conventions of the F. B. in 1863 and 1864, delegates from Canada were reported to be present, but no names were given. In Toronto, the Hibernian Society, originally organized in 1858, under the pretext of being a protective society, as against Orangeism, there was strong ground to suspect had become closely affiliated with the F. B. at New York. These suspicions were afterwards fully borne out by the President, Murphy, calling publicly on a St. Patrick's day for three cheers for James Stephens, the greatest living Irishman, and by Murphy's subsequent arrest and examination. Murphy, whom I never saw to my knowledge, is described to me, by those who knew him in Toronto, as at one time a prosperous cooper, with much mother wit, and great sturdiness of character. He was not merely the Irish Canadian Head Centre, he was also chief organizer for Canada. He was more than once on his organizing business in Hamilton, Ottawa, Quebec, and this city. Of two, at least, of his official visits to Montreal, I have a memorandum made at the time. That these facts will come in in the proper place.

XIII.

Instead, however, of forming ostensible "circles" of the F. B. with recognized centres in Canada, which it was known our law would not permit, the plan was recommended from New York that the sympathizers in Canada should endeavor to *do the same thing under another name*; or else to *get hold of existing societies*, such as the St. Patrick's Society of this city, and *convert them to Fenian purposes*. Both means were tried in Montreal; one failed, thanks to Father Dowd; the other has partially succeeded in spite of his advice and entreaties; in spite of Mr. McGee and of every respectable Catholic Irishman in the city. The evil is not contemptible, which all these means combined could not wholly arrest or eradicate.

The failure happened thus. A few young men, with two or three elders, who ought to have known better, determined in 1863 to organize an Hibernian Society here on the Toronto plan, though there could be no pretext here for such a protection against Orangeism in Montreal. Some of the first meetings of this society were held at the office of Mr. O. J. Devlin, Little St. James street, or in the rooms of Mr. B. Devlin, in the same building. The highest number present at any one meeting was 17. But the spark might spread, and, therefore, it was better to drop it in time. Mr. Henry J. Clarke had been invited to become its President, and draft a constitution, but, having put in the first clause that "no member of a se-

cret society " could belong to the Hibernian Society, Mr. Clarke and his draft were suddenly dropped. Subsequently, Mr. Walsh, (brother to my esteemed late partner, Mr. T. J. Walsh,) became President. The Rev. Mr. Dowd's attention, having been drawn to this Society, as directly transgressing the Bishop's pastoral, he took occasion to warn the members of his congregation, from the pulpit, against it. Thereupon the Hibernians sent a deputation to remonstrate with Father Dowd, and to ask the removal of the censure; the Rev. gentleman, before replying to the deputation, asked to be allowed to see their constitution and by-laws. These were left with him, and on the face appeared unexceptionable; but in cross-questioning, Father Dowd found there was another purpose, not expressed on the face of the document, but known among the members, as sending relief to Ireland. What the character and direction of this relief were, one illustration may suffice to show. At the time when the remains of the Fenian McManus, (whose name recently graced our City Concert Hall), were brought from California to New York and New York to Dublin for interment, Archbishop Cullen refused their admission into the Metropolitan Church of that city. The result was the procession bore the body past the Archbishop's residence, groaning loudly; and a refractory priest from Mayo, the Rev. Mr. Lavelle, pronounced an ovation over the coffin of the deceased in the cemetery of Glasnevin, according to the continental fashion. For this breach of all discipline Father Lavelle was suspended, or silenced, for two or three years. He consequently became the proto-martyr of the F. B. He became more—he ripened into a regular correspondent of Meehan's paper, the *Irish American*, and Murphy's paper, the *Irish Canadian*, still published at Toronto. Subscriptions were raised in America to sustain the Fenian priest against the traitor of an Archbishop; and among the remittances acknowledged by him as received was, "The Hibernian Society, Montreal, Canada, \$110 (or \$120), per J. Walsh, President."

The Hibernian Society in Montreal existed a year or two; it was then abandoned for it was found an effective method of *doing the same thing under another name* to try to get hold of the St. Patrick's Society.

XIV.

The present St. Patrick's Society, of Montreal, is exclusively an Irish and Roman Catholic Society, founded in 1854, of which, the Right Rev. Monsignor Bourget is patron, and the Rev. Clergy of St. Patrick's Church are chaplains. It bears, therefore, a national and religious responsibility, and its reputation, in both respects, ought to be above suspicion. The design of the F. B. to get control of the St. Patrick's Society dates back certainly four years, and first showed itself in a very insidious, and apparently trivial movement.

In the autumn of 1868, the Committee of the Society had considered the expediency of having a winter course of lectures. Mr. Thomas McKenna was then President, and Mr. McShane Vice President—two of the most worthy, upright, and law-abiding men in this

community. Passing one day in November through Little St. James Street, the President was accosted by Mr. F. B. McNamee, contractor, who stated that he was about to start for New York, and would endeavor to engage, if so authorized, lecturers for the Society's course. Mr. McKenna entered with Mr. McNamee the office of Mr. J. J. Curran, who was then one of the Secretaries of the Society, and in discussing who the Society should invite, Mr. McNamee suggested the name of Mr. John O'Mahoney. Mr. McKenna, who like many others at that day had his attention much drawn to the F. B. or their doings, after some further pressure by McNamee, gave the latter a formal letter of credentials, signed by the President and Secretary of the St. Patrick's Society, Montreal, to the Head Centre of the F. B. New York. This was an error of judgment, on the part of Messrs. McKenna and Curran, but it was nothing more. But mark the sequel.

Mr. F. B. McNamee, armed with his official introduction, visited the F B headquarters, Duane street, New York, and readily obtained the ear of the head centre, O'Mahoney. What he reported of Canada in general, and Montreal in especial, we can only judge by the tenor of the letter which O'Mahoney wrote back to our society. In this letter he regretted his inability to come himself to Montreal, but recommended to the committee his particular friend Mr. John Savage or Richard O'Gorman; he expressed his great satisfaction that the F B of New York and the St. Patrick's Society of Montreal had entered into correspondence and his hope for their future co-operation. When Mr. McNamee had made a visit to Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington, he returned, appeared in his place in the society, and this letter of O'Mahoney's being read its insertion on the minutes was moved. Mr. Richard McShane, Vice-President, and some other gentlemen present strongly opposed the motion, but already the secret influence at work among the members could muster a surprise majority, and on the minutes the head centre's letter was placed. Nearly three years later the disgraceful fact was brought to the knowledge of the society generally, and it was proposed to expunge the Fenian correspondence by a formal vote. But before this much called for measure could be taken an extraordinary incident--*the burning of the Society's books of record*--took place at the rooms occupied by them over Nordheimer's Hall on the night of the 17th January, or rather at a very early hour next morning.

The circumstances attending this fire were most singular. There had been a protracted meeting of the usual kind the night before. It had never been the custom to leave the books in the Hall. There was no safe, no cupboard, no shelf even for the books. This night they were by a special fatality, however, left in the open drawer of a plain deal table standing on the temporary wooden platform, near the door of the Hall. The fire (as was seen by myself and others next morning, while it was still smouldering), took place immediately under the spot where the table stood on the platform; it was just sufficient of a fire to burn part of the platform, the whole table, and the entire book of

records, binding and all. Not a scrap of charred paper remained, not a dog-eared angle of a folio, not a strip of russet leather—the record was absolutely and totally destroyed. Of course, the O'Mahoney correspondence, and some less direct evidence of Fenianism in our midst, were blotted out forever!

While McKenna was still president, in 1863, and with his full sanction, a test of membership, which honestly taken would have excluded all Fenians, was adopted after a long struggle. It was while the Society had its rooms in Toupin's building, Place D'Armes, that this was drawn up and proposed by Mr. McGee. In a single, long and strong sentence, which every old, and every new member was required to sign, this test excluded from admission all "members of secret societies," and was made so general to avoid all attempts at equivocation. The F. B., however, continued notwithstanding to sign, and to join, and to talk treason, and to sing sedition, before and after business hours, in the hall. Things went so far in this direction that, though re-elected President in April, 1864, Mr. McKenna resigned in disgust in June, and Mr. Vice-President McShane finished out the unexpired term. In April, 1865, Mr. Bernard Devlin was chosen President; since then he has been twice re-elected. The St. Patrick's Society has remained under his lead and government, and he remains responsible for its conduct before his fellow-citizens.

XV.

Before reciting the more recent Fenian facts, whether in relation to the revolution in the membership and management of St. Patrick's Society or not, it is necessary to carry out the narrative in some other particulars.

On the 17th of March, 1864, the Hibernian Society had a dinner, or supper, at the Exchange Hotel in this City. On the same day, in 1865, the same set of people had a dinner at the St. Louis Hotel. Of the latter, no account has transpired; but of the former, fortunately for the public peace, we got several particulars through a somewhat curious circumstance. All the evidence goes to show that there was a settled design from the first, on the part of the Fenians, to get hold of some persons of influence and respectability among the Irish citizens of Montreal; to compromise some such persons in the conspiracy, so that through pride of opinion, or fear, or favor, or affection these respectable persons, once compromised, would "stand by their order" in any event which might arise.

Among the active promoters of the Fenian dinner on St. Patrick's Day, 1864, were Mr. F. B. McNamee, Mr. O. J. Devlin, Mr. Daniel Lyons, Mr. W. B. Lenihan, correspondent of Murphy's paper and the *Montreal Herald*, Mr. J. J. O'Meara, a clerk in the City Hall, and Mr. J. McGrath, Secretary of the Hibernian Society. Of the others mention must be made more than once, but this Mr. McGrath, who has since left the country, we may as well dispose of at once. It was known to the authorities at that time that he attended the Fenian

Convention at Philadelphia, in 1865, as a delegate from Canada. McGrath was then in some way connected in business with a person in St. Lawrence Main Street, who has since left the country, and who was an open and avowed Fenian. Had he been arrested, as he should have been, on his return from the Philadelphia Fenian Convention, to Montreal some interesting documents might have been found on McGrath's person; but it is probable that we have, from other sources, the same intelligence which would have been secured by the seizure of such papers as a returned delegate might have had in his possession.

At the dinner in question, Mr. H. J. Clarke, Q. C., was invited to be present as a guest by Mr. Daniel Lyons and others. On leaving the National Society's concert late in the evening of the 17th, Mr. Clarke, in company with Mr. Jordan, lumber merchant, looked in at the Exchange Hotel, "about twelve o'clock," to see what was going on. "There were present," (says Mr. Clarke in his letter to the *Gazette*, March 19th, 1864) "a large number of young men and some ladies. Toasts were proposed and drunk and responded to." "I did not then," (adds Mr. Clarke) "nor do I now, second the feelings or the sentiments of the the majority of the speakers. Their remarks were most uncalled for," etc., etc." Mr. Clarke himself made a patriotic and national speech on that occasion, but his line of remark was quite distinct from that of the promoters of the gathering. In response to the toast of "Ireland's Mighty Dead," he referred especially to Daniel O'Connell and Archbishop Hughes, two of the most resolute enemies of the secret Irish societies; and in reference to the living, he eulogized the Irish clergy of Montreal, who had recently condemned that very society. In this, Mr. Clarke showed his characteristic boldness, as he has since showed it at Burlington, in the very face of the Fenian leaders there. An artful attempt it was to entrap a rising member of our bar, and an officer of the volunteer force, by the cunning promoters of the F. B. in this city; but it was signally defeated. No fair minded man could doubt Mr. Clarke for a moment when he declared promptly, without the loss of a single day, over his own signature in the public press: "It (The Hibernian Society) was not, in my opinion, a society calculated to do good to Ireland. * * * I am not and never have been a member of the Hibernian Society, or any other society of that stamp. I have never been, and never will be, found wanting in my duty to the Government under which I was born and under which I intend to live." The other speakers and promoters of the meeting held then, and have held ever since, a significant silence.

XVI.

The extent to which the Fenian organization extended, at any time, in the city has been the subject of various conjectures. It is certain the Hibernian Society's usual meeting never exceeded 17 persons, for they were carefully counted. But that Society was never

formidable and never represented the extent of the disaffection, whatever that really was. One correspondent wrote me in 1865, that he had good authority for reckoning the enrolled Fenian force in Montreal at 60,000 men—not less. Another, equally positive, fixed the exact number at 1,500—a serious discrepancy. I have now before me, as I write, a return made early in 1866 to the head-quarters of the F. B., Number 706 Broadway, New York, setting down the exact number of “reliable persons in Montreal” at 2,500. Of that return, like most Fenian figures, I venture to give credence to about *ten per cent.*, the additional *nought* was probably added by persons interested pecuniarily and otherwise in keeping up the magnitude of an organization in which they held office, and for which, rather than its importance should suffer diminution, they were ready to swallow more than a cypher, or two or three.

But, that in 1865, the organization existed here, and was submitted to a certain amount of discussion and even taxation, there is the best proof at hand. In the financial circular of the corresponding Secretary of the F. B., for September and October (printed by O’Sullivan and McBride, No. 280 Pearl Street, New York, Printers to the Brotherhood), there are the following entries:—

Sept. 19th—Montreal, Canada, per.....	\$60 50
Sept. 23rd—Montreal, Canada, per.....	92 75
Oct. 6th—Montreal, Canada, per.....	202 10

Or a total of..... \$355 35

There we find, within a space of eighteen days, three remittances, amounting to \$355, sent from this city to the treasurer of the ruthless invaders of Canada. Who sent this money? Who subscribed it? How much more was subscribed? How much more was sent? How much was consumed in “local expenses?”

In the same financial circular (I mention it here as I shall not return to it) there are the following Canadian entries:

Sept. 25th—Toronto, Canada, per.....	\$500 00
Oct. 10th—Quebec, Canada, per.....	dues, 104 00

And finally emboldened by impunity:—

Oct. 14th—Toronto, Canada West, per Michael Murphy...	300 00
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Within the three weeks indicated by the above dates the Toronto Fenians remitted \$800 to the Treasury, 706 Broadway; and the Quebec Fenians sent forward as “dues,” indicating a regular system of assessment, the sum of \$104.75. Assuming these dues to be monthly and at the rate of a quarter a dollar a month, the figures would indicate the presence of 200 enrolled Fenians in Quebec; and of the other sums, which are acknowledged as a “final call,” averaged say \$1 a man, they would indicate the presence of 355 Fenians in Montreal and 800 in Toronto.

XVII.

But I must guard the reader, who accompanies me in this statement, against drawing any positive conclusions as to the extent of membership from the amount of remittances made to New York. The ways and means were often raised in a very disingenuous manner. When Murphy and McNamee canvassed those they thought likely to subscribe on two occasions in this city, they came across several of my best friends. From one, on the steps of the Ontario Bank, they succeeded in extracting \$2 for the "relief of Ireland;" a man opposed to Fenianism as I am, but who fell into the trap of these artful emissaries; two others order them indignantly out of their places of business, and a fourth, whom they encountered near the Post Office, advised Murphy to quit the city or he would have the authorities set upon his track. The only thing I blame in these four friends was that they did not endeavor to ascertain the real object of these emissaries and then arrest them on the spot. Three of them were in the Commission of the Peace for this city and district. It was their bounden duty not to suffer such conspirators to be at large, and I have always said to them what I now repeat that they should have acted with greater decision. But the desire to avoid an unenviable notoriety; the hereditary Irish fear of the nickname "informers;" the contempt which these gentlemen felt for the conspiracy and its special representatives in Toronto and Montreal; the belief that the miserable thing would die out by degrees; all these considerations must be allowed to have influenced them in taking a different course.

One method of raising funds, to which I may refer to here, was by raffling a watch or some other article of value, often won, but never delivered. This served the double purpose of having a select meeting of the initiated "admission by ticket," and also by imposing a proportionate tax on each person present. Lists of persons who attended some of those Fenian raffles in Montreal and Quebec were within forty-eight hours in the possession of the authorities. Three such lists are among my own papers, as regards this city. The numbers returned vary from forty to fifty, but I am happy to be able to say that, except a very few already familiar names, there was not a man present of the least character or consequence. I am very far, indeed, from reflecting upon the day laborers, carters, or any other class of honest, hard-working men. I know there are in that order men as worthy of respect for their probity as in any other rank of life; but when it is a question of upsetting dynasties and overthrowing governments I do not think that men of that class, as a general rule, ought to be held responsible for adopting the errors of those who ought to know and to do better. I hit only at the petty demagogues and chief promoters of this mischief, and I, therefore, decline to make public the list of those who "raffled" for Fenian watches in this city and so contributed, knowingly or ignorantly, to the Fenian funds.

XVIII.

At the end of April, 1864, Mr. McGee became Minister of Agriculture and Statistics, an office which he continued to hold until the expiration of the late Canadian Government, on the last day of June, 1867, a period of three years and three months. In some respects this term of office was a very trying one for him. The only Irish Catholic in the Government—with this terrible pestilence abroad among the class to which he belonged—with these daily disclosures dropping in on individual members of the Government and on the whole executive collectively, his position was not enviable. After writhing under the effects of these disclosures, he was obliged to attend public meetings and to speak on topics of the day. Reasoning with himself on his duty he used to say, "if I do not set an example of determination and vigor, of moral courage in this case, how can I expect my friends A. B. or C. who have no especial responsibility to the public, as I have, to fight the incoming evil in their private walks of life." Rightly or wrongly this was the reasoning that mainly determined Mr. McGee's course in doing what Mr. Devlin so much condemns "lecturing the people against Fenianism."

XIX.

Hearing what he could not but hear, and knowing what he could not but know, Mr. McGee, at the annual St. Patrick's Society festival for the benefit of the poor (January 11, 1865), felt it to be his duty—and in the then state of facts felt free to make the following statement in the City Hall, full of Irish and other citizens :—

"There is another subject which more immediately concerns ourselves in Montreal and in Canada, which has lately occupied a good deal of the attention of the press—I allude to the alleged spread of a seditious Irish Society, originating at New York, whose founders have chosen to go behind the long Christian record of their ancestors to find in days of Pagan darkness and blindness an appropriate name for themselves. A statement having been made the other day in the *Toronto Globe*, on the authority of its Montreal correspondent, that there were 1,500 of these contemporary Pagans in Montreal—a statement made, I am sure, without intentional malice on the correspondent's part—I felt bound, as I suppose you may have seen, to deny absolutely that statement. The denial was not given in my own words, but the alleged fact was denied and that was the main point. I now, in your presence, repeat that denial on behalf of the Irish Catholics of this city ; I say there could not be 15 such scamps associated and meeting together, not to say 1,500, without your knowledge and mine, and I repeat absolutely that there is no such body amongst us and that the contrary statements are deplorably untrue and unjust and impolitic as well as unjust. I regret that papers of great circulation should lend themselves to the propagation of such statements which have a direct tendency to foster and enhance the very evil they intend to combat. See what the result has been in some parts of Upper Canada. Any two or more nervous or mischievous magistrates—and with 11,000 men in the commission of the peace there must be some of both these sorts—any two or more of these may subject a neighborhood to all the rigors of martial law. Already indecent and unauthorized searches have been made for concealed arms in Catholic churches ; already, as in

some of the towns of Bruce, the magistrates are very improperly, in my opinion, arming one class of people against another. What consequences of evil may flow from this step should make any responsible man shudder. And what is it all owing to? Why to these often invented and always exaggerated newspaper reports. Observe the absurd figure Upper Canada is made to cut in all this business—the Protestant millions are made to tremble before a fraction of a fraction; for if there are Fenians in that quarter of the world I would venture to say they are as wholly insignificant in numbers as in every other respect. At the risk, however, of sharing the fate of all unasked advisers, I would say to the Catholics of Upper Canada in each locality, if there is any, the least proof that this foreign disease has seized on any, the least among you, establish at once for your own sakes, for the country's sake a *cordon sanitaire* around your people; establish a committee which will purge your ranks of this political leprosy; weed out and cast off those rotten members who, without a single governmental grievance to complain of in Canada, would yet weaken and divide us in these days of danger and anxiety. Instead of sympathy for the punishment they are drawing upon themselves there ought to be general indignation at the perils such wretches would, if permitted to exist among us, draw upon the whole community socially, politically and religiously. How would any Catholic who hears me like to see the parish church a stable and St. Patrick's a barrack? How would our workingmen like to see our docks desolate, our canals closed, our 1,100 new buildings arrested, ruin in our streets and famine shivering among the ruins? And this is what these wretched conspirators, if they had the power, would bring to pass as surely as fire produces ashes from wood or cold produces ice from water. I repeat here deliberately that I do not believe in the existence of any such organization in Lower Canada, certainly not in Montreal; but that there are, or have been, emissaries from the United among us for the purpose of establishing it has been so often and so confidently stated that what I have said on the general subject will, I hope, not be considered untimely or uncalled for."

Mr. McGee felt able to deny the existence of "any such body," or "any such organization amongst us" in January, 1865; the anxious days of the 17th March, 1865 and 1866, had not yet come; at the January meeting of the same Society, for either of the following years, he could not, unfortunately, have made a similar statement though he might have repeated and emphasised the warning given a year earlier.

XX.

That the crime of *incivism*, of bad citizenship and treacherous neighborhood, can be brought home to the Fenian sympathizers among us no one can for a moment consider doubtful. In September, 1865, the Philadelphia Convention, at which McGrath of the Hibernian Society was present as one of the delegates from Canada, was held. At that Convention the organization as it had existed since 1857 was changed into a formal parody of a government under the title of "The Irish Republic." Col. O'Mahoney was elected President, a Senate was chosen, and Secretaries of the Treasury of War and Civil Affairs were created. Within three months, however, the new cast broke in two; the Senate and the Secretary of War (Sweeney), went over to President Roberts on the avowed issue of finding "a case against England" in Canada. Whoever, therefore, after that date adhered to

the Roberts-Sweeney faction, whoever gave aid and comfort to the enemy without was not only guilty of incivism towards the Empire but of a treacherous betrayal of the peace and well-being of Canada to its avowed deadly enemies. It is to be noted that the remittances to New York from Montreal, quoted in paragraph XVI, were subsequent to the Philadelphia Convention.

XXI.

The people of Canada do not as yet know, and may they never know experimentally, what they have escaped in escaping the horrors of a successful invasion. The people of Canada do not know—and have not even conceived—the horrors that were in store for them if this vast Irish-American conspiracy had not been broken up and dispersed, partly by internal dissensions and partly by the demonstrated hopelessness of dissevering the Irish in Canada as a whole from their duty to the country of their adoption. But I will give two illustrations of the danger which fortunately passed over us. I state, and I defy the parties accused to submit it to a judicial investigation, that a former citizen of Montreal, now residing in New York, and it is known to ten or twelve persons at least who will read these lines, having espoused the Fenian cause wrote letters here during the last exciting period on the frontier, advising a run on the banks as a co-operative movement and that a run was commenced on the Savings' Bank and to a less extent on some of the other banks. I have an authentic extract of a very clever and bitter letter before me at this moment to this effect, from the party referred to, to the most active sympathizer in this city; and the copy of another letter to the same effect to another resident of Montreal. But it was not by pecuniary confusion and loss alone we were to be attacked. Schooled as the B. were in the desperate strategy of the civil war our towns and cities were to be assailed from within by fire and faggot, if the enemy were once able to make a lodgement on our soil. Had the case of Michael Murphy only come to trial it would have been proved that there existed a deliberate plan to fire our towns and cities in order to distract the movements of our troops and to occupy our people in various places simultaneously. It would have been proved on Murphy's trial that the chief organizer of the Western States, an attorney called McCormack, and sometimes addressed as Judge McCormack, visited Murphy early in 1866 in Toronto and proposed to him this scheme of co-operation. That subsequently McCormack returned to Cleveland, Ohio, from which grenades and other combustibles were forwarded by a special messenger, who was then at Kingston. It would have been proved that though abandoned or rejected by Murphy in March, 1866, this incendiary plot was entertained and encouraged by some among us and that three boxes of grenades were forwarded from Chicago later in the year in charge of three Irish-American soldiers, called Burke, Fitzgerald and Lynch. So confident, indeed, of a Fenian rising in our towns and cities were the

Fenian leaders at New York, that on the 16th of March, last year, the following telegram was sent from New York and delivered to an organizer in the West :—

"Everything progressing splendidly. Solid work, being action everywhere. Will write. Canada ours in 20 days.

"D. O'SULLIVAN,
"Secretary C. A. F. B."

XXII.

Of course, the same appliances of intrigue and intimidation which came to light on the Irish trials were industriously employed in Canada. A choice collection of threatening letters might be made by the present writer. But what was much more serious were the attempts made, and which are best known to the military authorities, to corrupt the regular and volunteer forces. One offender, Michael McDonald, got very properly four months and a fine of \$50 for tampering with the regulars. Men were sent from New York with special instructions to enlist in regiments which might be ordered to Canada, and Stephens personally boasted to a credible informant of mine that if he visited Montreal he would get men wearing Her Majesty's uniform "to dine and wine him." This may have been all *la blague*, but certainly the army and volunteers were exposed to very dangerous influences, and it is greatly to the credit both of officers and men that, all things considered, there was so little serious disaffection. A like propoganda was carried into the police. When our worthy Mayor, Mr. Starnes, two years ago felt it necessary to administer the oath of allegiance to all persons in the employment of the city seven men stepped from the ranks and refused to take the oath. One was a Quaker, and therefore a non-combatant, one a French-Canadian and five were Irish. Of these last one appeared at a meeting of Fenians soon after in Portland, Maine, was glorified as a martyr and dropped like a hot potatoe!

Even in the workshops and service of our great railway, so essential at such a time, the conspiracy was carried with some success, and when early last year Mr. Brydges first undertook to form his men into a special corps between 80 and 90, almost all of them, I regret to say, my countrymen by birth, refused the oath of allegiance and declined to defend their own workshops where they were daily employed in earning their daily bread.

XXIII.

I return now to the systematic and persistent attempts of the Fenians to get hold of the St. Patrick's Society of this city, and to make it their instrument in working out the plot against Canada and the Empire. It was felt that Mr. McGee was a serious obstacle to the success of this plan. All his personal friends were strong anti-Fenians; he himself had frequently denounced the brotherhood

by voice and pen; he was the author of the anti-Fenian test of membership; he was more than suspected of having helped to extinguish the Hibernian Society. It was felt also that Mr. Bernard Devlin, for sundry reasons, was quite willing to be put forward as the antagonist of Mr. McGee's policy and politics, as well as of that gentleman personally; and, therefore, a sufficient infusion of the wrong sort of members having been month by month recruited and enlisted Mr. Bernard Devlin was on the first Monday, 1865, elected President of the Society.

XXIV.

A few weeks later an opportunity was given to the respective sections of Irish opinion to try their strength. Mr. McGee had gone to Ireland to represent this country at the opening of the Industrial Exhibition by H. R. H. the Prince of Wales. On the 16th of May he made his well-known Wexford speech, in which he committed over again the unpardonable sin of lecturing against Fenianism. In that speech, among other results of his "twenty years experience of Irish life in America," the speaker had said:—

"However it may conflict with any existing theory, I must get out with the plain statement of the fact—which every one who knows the United States people knows to be true—namely, that there is no such thing in existence as a national sentiment of sympathy with Ireland in that country. The electioneering rhetoric of the stump orator, the spontaneous benevolence of the Americans during the famine—a benevolence which they exercised towards Madeira and the Cape de Verdes in their famine, and Hamburg, when it was laid in ashes, just as cheerfully as towards Ireland—has misled many in this country to attribute to another and more permanent cause that noble exercise of national benevolence. But I state here, as an indisputable truth, that there is no more national sympathy for Ireland, as Ireland, in the United States, than Japan and far less than exists for Russia."

And of the Fenians in the United States he had given in the same speech this account:

"It is true the emissaries of these illuminated regenerators of their race of whom you have heard so much, whose head-centre was brought by spirit-rapping to Bedlam and who came out of Bedlam a head-centre, this hopeful society of regenerators, deploring the benighted state of their provincial countrymen, do sometimes seduce them from their allegiance to a government against which, as administered, there is not a shadow of grievance; but the Irishmen in Canada, with a very rare exception, show such emissaries the door in double quick time. I have never myself seen a specimen of the *genus* Fenian in Canada; but I hear there are and I dare say there may be seen old [?] ones among our half million, since Solomon says "the number of fools is infinite." [Laughter.] But their number is at most insignificant and I have no doubt that their number in the United States is grossly and purposely exaggerated. Their morbid hatred of England has been played upon during the civil war by bounty brokers and recruiting sergeants, and they have mistaken the surface slang of two or three great cities for the settled national sentiment of the American people which is not, I repeat, one sheet [?] more pro-Irish than it is pro-Japanese. They have deluded each other and many of them are ready to betray each other. I have myself seen letters from

some of the brethren from Chicago, Cincinnati and other places offering their secret minutes and members rolls for sale; the infamous old "stag" business over again; for as sure as filth produces vermin it is of the very nature of such conspiracies as this to breed informers and approvers."

The speech itself was first published in the *Dublin Evening Mail*, the chief Conservative organ in Ireland, simply because Mr. Scott, one of the editors, was an old personal friend of Mr. McGee, and had been handed the manuscript for it was a written speech; but the fact of having made it at all, of having in Ireland given such an account of Fenianism in America, of having published it in the Conservative organ excited the hostility of the Devlin party in Montreal to such a pitch that they came out with their well-remembered "disclaimer" in the columns of the *Montreal Herald*. To this disclaimer they appended the names of P. Brennan, W. O'Brien, L. Devany, and several others of Mr. McGee's most intimate friends. Was this a blunder or a design? I am disposed to believe it a work of design, since it compelled the gentlemen in question either to leave their names in silence attached to the "disclaimer" or to share individually the responsibility of Mr. McGee's speech made 3,000 miles away from them, and prompted by considerations which he, of course, could not fully communicate at that distance. To their honor, be it said, and to the encouragement of every fearless public man—they never hesitated one moment as to their course; man by man over their own signatures they separated themselves from the signers leaving only the wretched Fenian element behind. When Mr. McGee returned in July his reception by his old friends was a triumph, and this was repeated at that very splendid public dinner given to him in November following in St. Lawrence Hall.

XXV.

And here I beg to pause for a moment to address a few earnest words to the commercial men of Montreal, more especially in relation to the aid and assistance steadily extended on all occasions during 1865, 1866 and 1867 to the Fenian conspirators among us by the *Montreal Herald*. As a fire cannot exist without a draft, nor fish out of water, so neither can a revolutionary fraternity of this kind without a certain degree of notoriety and newspaper advocacy. It is my duty to state the fact, that on every occasion during the past three years the *Herald* has extended its aid and assistance to the Fenian sympathisers. With or without a name, with or without proof, nothing was too base for the *Herald* to publish coming from that quarter. All private remonstrances against the dangers of such a course, against its treason in this respect to the city and the country, have proved in vain. Whether a supposed latent source of annexationist influence was discovered lurking under Fenianism, or whether the amiable Mr. Holton has inspired it, or both, one thing is quite certain that the disloyal embers smouldering among a small portion of our Irish population have been carefully nursed and tended by the *Montreal*

Herald. While I was doing my best to break them down, the *Herald* was trying hard to build them up. If it did not overload this narrative I could quote twenty proofs of this charge from the editorial and other columns of Messrs. Penny and Wilson's paper during the last three years ; but commercial men of Montreal who have these proofs before them, deeply interested as they are in the security of life and property in this city, must decide for themselves whether this is a paper they ought to uphold and sustain.

XXVI.

During the winter, 1865-1867, the Fenian excitement in the United States continued, the Roberts or anti-Canadian wing seeming to gain in men and means upon the O'Mahoney-Stephens' faction. All information, public and private, went to show that the British provinces might expect a raid early in spring, probably on or about St. Patrick's Day, 1866. Great anxiety was naturally felt for the peace of our chief cities on that day. Strong pressure was brought to bear on the Government "to proclaim" Toronto, at least, under military law, but, as the result proved, Sir John Macdonald showed his wisdom in refusing to recommend such a proclamation. Murphy and his gang were allowed to parade the streets unmolested, and a few days afterwards Murphy, Moriarty, Sheedy and others were arrested at Cornwall with arms, ammunition and tickets to Portland on their persons, on their way to join the April expedition against Campobello. As a paper relating to this period the following secret circular may here be given :—

(SECRET CIRCULAR.)

COUNCIL CHAMBERS, HEADQUARTERS, F.B.,

32 East 17th Street, New York, March 31, 1860.

BROTHERS,—Let all men of the first-class prepare at once to receive orders.

Let all others send every available dollar and all available war material at the earliest moment to these headquarters.

Direct everything to John O'Mahoney.

In the presence of God and our Fatherland we pledge you to strike. Should we fail to redeem this pledge, trust us no longer. In fraternity,

(Signed)

JAMES J. ROGERS,
P. A. SINNOTT,
JOHN M. TOBIN,
JEREMIAH KAVANAGH,
JAMES McGRATH,
JOHN O'MAHONEY, H. C., F. B.,
WILLIAM G. HALPIN, I. R. A.,
JOHN McCafferty, Capt. I. R. A.

While the Roberts-Sweeney faction were promising their dupes on the other hand that Canada would be theirs "in twenty days" of the same month it was thought highly desirable that a public demonstration should be made by the several Irish societies in this city of their loyalty to the Crown and Government. Lord Monck happening

to be then staying at the St. Lawrence Hall, it was arranged by Mr. McGee that he should publicly receive the St. Patrick's, the Benevolent, the Temperance and Young Men's Society in joint procession on the forenoon of the 17th of March. The scene of that day in front of the hotel is too fresh in the public memory to need description, but it was an occasion not unattended with anxiety. Had the Fenian faction mustered courage to give tongue, all the intended good effect would have been lost. As it was, two members of the Committee of the St. Patrick's Society reported to me as Mr. W. B. Linehan, now Recording Secretary, and a Mr. Callahan, a printer lately from the United States, standing right opposite His Excellency, refused to uncover at "God Save the Queen." There were a few hisses as the air ended and the vast mass moved off; and the loyal members of the Society spoke unreservedly of expelling the two offenders from their ranks. But as usual the quiet men relapsed into their quietude, while the conspirators, emboldened by impunity, went on from bad to worse.

It was on this occasion Mr. McGee indignantly repudiated for his countrymen in Montreal, "as a body," every taint of Fenianism; and, *as a body*, he repudiates the same charge *now* as he did *then*. As a body he utterly denies that the Irish Catholic population of this city are to be held accountable for the criminal conduct of eight or ten conspirators and their few dozens or scores of dupes, be the same more or less. And it is precisely one, among many reasons, that the good and sound body of the Irish of Montreal may be ever separated from this wretched clique of conspirators that these papers are now made public.

XXVIII.

Before and after St. Patrick's Day, the Fenians in the National Society were particularly busy in recruiting their numbers. A silly but mischievous rumor having gone abroad, on the strength of a speech of Mr. O. R. Gowan, in Upper Canada, that the Government "intended to arm the Orangemen," instead of making inquiry of myself or any other member of the Executive then sitting in Montreal. Mr. Devlin and his disturbers call in hot haste a special meeting of the society to interrogate the Government officially and peremptorily on the subject. If the man has any sense of propriety left he must long remember the cool and correlative reply he received in return from the Provincial Secretary. Yet the folly of the act at such a time could only be surpassed by its mischievous tendency. If Mr Gowan made an unwise speech in a time of general excitement, Mr. Devlin taking up the cudgels on the part of an exclusively Catholic Society was not going to mend the matter, but quite the reverse. But this meddling looked like zeal to the ignorant; it served the purposes of Fenianism to pretend that the Catholics of Upper Canada were in imminent danger from Orangemen; and so it was "a good enough Morgan, 'till after the election." At the annual election in April, Mr. Devlin was re-elected President, and in the same month a curious

incident occurred! When Murphy was in jail at Cornwall, a member of the Society, said to be Daniel Lyons, visited him there, in order, among other things, to offer Mr. Devlin's professional services for the defence of the head-centre. Of course, Mr. Devlin could not plead in an Upper Canada court without being regularly called by the benchers, on an examination after twelve months' notice given. This he right well knew. Why then this pretended professional interference, repeated subsequently with the Fort Erie raiders in Toronto jail? Was it not under the guise of a mistake as to the rules of the profession in Upper Canada to get an opportunity of holding confidential intercourse with the prisoners? Mr. Devlin says that this branch of his conduct was strictly professional! If the Fenians had sent for him it, no doubt, would have been. But was it strictly professional to go all the way to New York to *tout* for Fenian clients in the bureau of President Roberts? Mr. Devlin says he has and his committee have been showing about a letter of Mr. Cameron, Q.C., of Toronto, agreeing to undertake the defence of the Fort Erie raiders for a certain fee. From whom did Mr. Devlin obtain the letter of Mr. Cameron? From the Fenian chief who alone had possession of it. And what must we think of a relation between a Colonel of Canadian Volunteers and President Roberts, when the latter would place in the hands of the former his private correspondence with any third party? The *entente* must have been cordial when such proofs of intimacy exist to illustrate it.

XXIX.

But later in the year, in the memorable first days of June and July, I can show Mr. Devlin's conduct to have been wavering and suspicious in the extreme. In those days several consultations were held among influential Irish Catholics as to the necessity of filling up the ranks of the skeleton companies of the Prince of Wales regiment and of taking an active part with the rest of our fellow-citizens in the drill associations formed under the Hon. James Ferrier. Some of these consultations were held at the home of my friend, Mr. M. P. Ryan, and some at my residence. On one or two occasions Mr. Devlin was present, and it will be within the recollection of many who were also present, that Mr. Devlin distinctly refused to aid us in recruiting at that time—that he declared “he would not make himself unpopular” by such effort; that he had already made sacrifices enough for the service, and that he was disgusted with the whole thing.

It was at this critical time Mr. Devlin made his rather artful attempt to get the Canadian Government to send him out of the country as an ambassador to the F. B. The facts are thus related in a recent correspondence in the *Daily News* :—

“Now, Sir, what will your correspondent say when I tell him, on the best authority, that Mr. Devlin (Colonel, I beg his pardon) not only asked for leave of absence, but asked the Government for permission to leave the country and remain in the United States during the critical days of June, 1866?

"Such is the fact—and here's the proof under the plea of using his moral influence" (where acquired let himself as the defender of that 'ilk' account) Mr. Devlin sent Mr. Charles Schiller to the Hon. Mr. Cartier to ask authority to go to New York, and there to negotiate with the Fenian leaders, and to try, with his persuasiveness, to induce them *not* to invade us! Prodigious! This would have given the *Colonel* leave of absence for an indefinite time, and at the expense of a Government he affects to disperse and would also have given him further notoriety and *eclat* as an embassy to the F.B.

"Mr. Cartier's instantaneous answer, of course, was that the Canadian Government could recognize no negotiations with marauders and filibusters like the Fenians."

Of Mr. Devlin's military conduct when actually under arms I say nothing as I know nothing of my own knowledge. But he refused to exert himself to recruit the ranks of his own regiment before he went, I repeat; that he went unwillingly, I repeat; that he talked of "the hardship of fighting against his own countrymen"—that is the American city rabble, I repeat; that he took the very first opportunity he could seize to cast up his commission and peel off his uniform, I also repeat. It is pretended that he resigned in his over-zeal to serve his regiment. That he considered the Prince of Wales Regiment were badly treated while out on the frontier by some person or persons in authority. Did he ever specify any such charge of ill-treatment? Did he ever demand any enquiry into the circumstances? I assert he never did anything of the kind, and that there is not a scrap of writing in any Government office in relation to the alleged cause of his prompt resignation. He seems, in short, to have felt when he got back with safety from Durham: "Well, I had to go out that time, lucky it was a false alarm—but if they ever catch me again"—and so he resigned.

XXX.

During the critical days of March and June it is well known that several persons, most of them in humble life, left the city. Two of my near neighbors lost their coachmen, and others their gardeners and others their servants. Wages, which had accumulated, were drawn by both male and female domestics, but whether to be invested in Irish Republican bonds as they foolishly boasted, there is no proof. A person named George Maguire, a ship chandler, who made himself very busy in writing anonymous letters to the press and private individuals, had stated that he had seen such bonds offered for sale in this city. Fortunately Mr. McGee collected from different sources five of these letters, all in the same handwriting, and traced them to Maguire. He was arrested and had up before M. Delisle, Esq., then acting *Juge de la Paix*. He got a thorough sifting, but it came out that he had only heard of, not seen, the bonds. His affidavit is a curiosity of the anonymous letter writing school. This same fellow was the author of two alarming letters to Mr. Ferrier and Professor Cornish, stating that the Bible Society's house would be burned by incendiaries; fortunately the letters were shown to Mr. McGee and by companies

with the others in his possession their author and their true value were ascertained. As to the fugitives of June and March, 1866, some of them have returned to the city and others have not. One of the latter, whose address is before me, assured a young gentleman of this city, in whose father's employment he had been and who sometime since met him in New York, "that he was a true Fenian and had it not been for a very slight mistake the Fenians of Montreal would have risen in the night between the 2nd and 3rd of June and one of their first acts would have been to assassinate the Hon. Mr. McGee." I quote verbatim the statement of my informant.

XXXI.

Uninstructed by the mutual exposures of the Roberts and O'Mahoney factions and the miserable failures of Ridgeway and St. Armand, the sympathizers in Montreal continued active as ever. The Fenian trials, instead of acting as a sedative, actually proved a stimulant. If Mr. Devlin could have had the trials in Montreal, he would, no doubt, have found a jury to his own mind. But a Toronto and a township jury were less tractable. Mr. McGee was severely blamed for his letter to Father Hendricken, of Waterbury, for refusing to interfere for one Terence McDonald, who returned himself in the prisoners' list as a native of Paisley, Scotland, religion none. This McDonald is now an inmate of the Connecticut State Prison for rape; the worthy colleague of that O'Brien, also one of our "liberators," who was executed last week for the brutal murder of his mistress. There is, however, no doubt that the acquittal of the Rev. Mr. Lumsden and the condemnation of the Rev. Mr. McMahon gave a great handle to the F. B. If one was guilty, the other was equally so; indeed the evidence of the written protection given by Mr. Lumsden was stronger than any one point proved against Mr. McMahon; and I will venture to say now what I could not appropriately say before, that it ought to be a matter of serious reconsideration for the Government of the new Dominion, this case of Father McMahon.

Uninstructed and undeterred by these and the outlawry of Murphy and his men, our sympathizers still kept recruiting. Advancing in boldness they placed on the walls of the City Hall the names of the Fenian "martyr" McManus and the Fenian General Corcoran among the names Irishmen in Canada should hold in veneration. It is said these names were up two or three meetings before they were observed; it may well be so for in that long and not over brilliant room few mottoes, except those near the chandelier, are ever seen at night. Last January, however, they were seen and the fact became public. It naturally excited the public indignation. But the new members and their President, so ready to call public meetings on any or all pretexts, did not dare to sift the subject. The question still remains unanswered. By whose orders were those Fenian mottoes printed and put up on behalf of St. Patrick's Society on the walls of the City Hall of this city. At a meeting held in the

Society's rooms, after the business was over, Fenian songs such as the "Wearing of the Green" were about this time frequently introduced and no notice was taken of the offence by the President, who was personally cognizant of the fact. It remains only to add that at the last election for the St. Patrick's Society, when it was so necessary to Mr. Devlin to renew his lease of office, in order to have that vantage ground of attack upon me, another fusion of pro-Fenians took place. The meeting before the annual election about 90 new members were admitted for \$1 or \$2, of which Mr. Daniel Lyons paid, out of his own pocket, the collective initiation fee of \$81 or \$82 dues. Does any one suppose this was a private gift of Mr. Lyons? And if not from what fund was it taken? And what was that fund?

XXXII.

Beside Judge McCormack Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal were favored with the presence, from time to time, of other organizers from the United States. So late as October last, one of the agents of the organization, named John Lennon (if that was his original name), was at the St. Lawrence Hall, in this city, where he had entered himself under the name of Reynolds. While here he consulted (as he himself said), with two men especially, named McNamee and James Carroll. He (Lennon *alias* Reynolds), had previously visited Ottawa city; had paid particular attention to the armoury and the Parliamentary buildings there; had been more than once at Prescott and had made notes of the state of things along the Ottawa and Prescott railway. These notes he communicated to a *weaker* brother at Troy, on his return to the United States and by a round about which I do not feel more particularly bound to explain. The accounts of Mr. Lennon's Canadian tour found their way into my personal custody.

XXXIII.

These and other pieces of evidence in the exclusive possession of the executive, which I have no access to, and to which I have no right to refer, more than to say that they exist, forced the Canadian Government, in the session of 1866, to make Fenianism the subject of legislation. On the assembling of Parliament the very first day, His Excellency, who had just opened the House by his speech, remaining on the precincts to give his sanction to the requisite measure, the *Habeas Corpus Act*, for the first time in 28 years, was suspended by a unanimous vote of both Houses, all the three readings being had at one sitting. Another act was the same day passed with equal celerity extending to Lower Canada the provisions of the Upper Canada Act, to punish in the section as a felony triable by court martial all "lawless aggressions from the subjects of foreign countries." Two months later our sympathizers again compelled Parliament to remind them that it was aware of their existence when it passed the Act founded on the Irish Act against unlawful training and drilling, and

allowing any Justice of the Peace to seize any "pike, pike head, spear, dirk, dagger, sword, pistol, gun, rifle, or other weapon, gunpowder, or lead or cartridges, bullets, or other ammunition or munitions of war" if informed by the oaths of two witnesses that they "are for any purpose dangerous to the public peace," and it subjects every one found carrying or keeping such arms, if the Justice *has just grounds for suspicion* to be arrested, and if indicted and convicted, punished by fine and imprisonment." The first and third of these Acts were, of course, directed against traitors in Canada conspiring against the peace of the country; fortunately, though three or four arrests took place under the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus Act*, none were of consequence sufficient to induce the Government to depart from its resolution not to have a State trial in Canada except under circumstances of peculiar aggravation. Every man of patriotic feeling must feel that it is a sad pity the Statute Book of Canada should be disfigured by the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus Act* in the year of grace 1866; but let not Irishmen in Canada deceive themselves; it is to the frenzy of some of our deluded countrymen in Montreal and elsewhere—and to the bad faith and false citizenship of the demagogues who have misled them that this stigma owes its origin.

XXXIV.

I have thus run rapidly over the attempt to establish Fenianism in Montreal during the last few years. The facts stated in my paper of Friday last, or in my paper of Tuesday, have not been questioned over any man's name out of our whole 130,000 inhabitants. I perceive that Mr. Deylin has applied for a justicial investigation on one point, the reported burning of the books at St. Patrick's rooms on the night of the 14th of January last. I am glad that his audacity has carried him so far, though up to this hour [Wednesday, at midnight, August 21], no summons of any count has reached me. But he has asked for a justicial investigation and he shall have one, and I trust it may take place before the Montreal election. There are witnesses to be found whose testimony will enlighten and serve the city—that is all I will say on that head at present.

The narrative which I have thus hastily thrown together, while ill in body and pre-occupied in mind between two contested elections, in constituencies nearly a hundred miles apart, I present to the public—especially to my fellow-citizens, with all its imperfections on its head. For every fact stated I am personally, politically, morally and legally responsible. I can safely say I have overstated nothing for any case whatever, against any person whatever. But it was my intention, as I conceive it was my duty, time and occasion concurring, to bring the burning glass of public opinion to bear full on the chief offenders. It was my duty to exhibit to our fellow-citizens generally the fierce, though suppressed, struggle which has been going on of late between the Fenian sympathizers and the good subjects of our own city. It was a struggle not confined to Montreal

nor to the Irish ranks. When one sees the *Herald* for party purposes take up these miserable conspirators, and the *Toronto Globe* lend its type to Mike Murphy's paper the *Irish Canadian*, to enable the Fenian organ to issue "Clear Grit" *extras*, one can fancy the lengths to which party spirit is capable of leading such people. I present this narrative of facts, in conclusion, to my neighbors and fellow-citizens to show them some of the danger they have safely passed in the dark and the necessity for marking those gulfs and pitfalls with more lights and other precautions. Instead of overstating I have understated my case; and if the citizens generally stand by me, as I believe they will, we shall fairly, legally and constitutionally overthrow and extinguish the hopes of the clique of Fenian conspirators who still remain in Montreal, and every man of whom are now active backers of Mr. Devlin. Mr. Linehan and Mr. Lyons are doing their best for him, as they did for Mike Murphy. Mr. O. J. Devlin, Notary Public, is particularly active for his brother; Mr. F. B. McNamee organized the first Devlin meeting, at the Mechanics' Hall, on the night of the — ultimo, by moving Mr. Peter Donovan to the chair, which Mr. Donovan graciously accepted on the motion of Mr. F. B. The group is as complete as the demonstration is complete, and it is now for the good people of Montreal to decide whether they shall govern the city or the city govern them.

ERRATUM.—The Quaker who refused the oath of allegiance did so at the Grand Trunk Railroad Works, not at the City Hall.